

# What is High Blood Pressure?

## What is high blood pressure?

High blood pressure (also referred to as HBP or hypertension) is when your blood pressure, the force of blood flowing through your blood vessels, is consistently too high.

## Your blood pressure numbers and what they mean

Your blood pressure is recorded as two numbers:

**Systolic blood pressure (the top number)** – indicates how much pressure your blood is exerting against your artery walls when the heart beats.

**Diastolic blood pressure (the bottom number)** – indicates how much pressure your blood is exerting against your artery walls while the heart is resting between beats.

Learn what's considered normal, as recommended by the American Heart Association:

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic mm Hg (top #)	Diastolic mm Hg (bottom #)
Normal	less than 120 and	less than 80
Elevated	120-129 and	less than 80
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 1	130-139 or	80-89
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 2	140 or Higher or	90 or Higher
Severe Hypertension*	Higher than 180 and/or	Higher than 120

## The 3 Ms of blood pressure control

### Medication

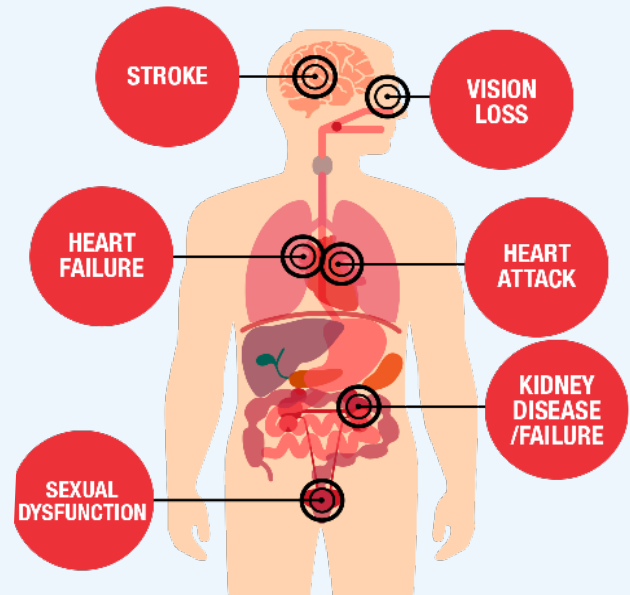
The best way to protect yourself is to take your blood pressure medication as prescribed by your provider

### Measure

The only way to know if you have high blood pressure is to have your blood pressure measured

### Modification

- Stop smoking
- Eat healthy
- Exercise
- Lose weight



## High blood pressure threatens your health and quality of life

Left undetected or uncontrolled, high blood pressure can lead to:

- **Heart attack** — High blood pressure damages arteries that can become blocked and prevent blood flow to the heart muscle.
- **Stroke** — High blood pressure can cause blood vessels that supply blood and oxygen to the brain to become blocked or burst.
- **Heart failure** — The increased workload from high blood pressure can cause the heart to enlarge and fail to supply blood to the body.
- **Kidney disease or failure** — High blood pressure can damage the arteries around the kidneys and interfere with their ability to filter blood effectively.
- **Vision loss** — High blood pressure can strain or damage blood vessels in the eyes.
- **Sexual dysfunction** — High blood pressure can lead to erectile dysfunction in men and may contribute to lower libido in women.
- **Angina** — Over time, high blood pressure can lead to heart disease including microvascular disease (MVD). Angina (chest pain) is a common symptom.
- **Peripheral artery disease (PAD)** — Atherosclerosis caused by high blood pressure can lead to narrowed arteries in the legs, arms, stomach and head, causing pain or fatigue.

*\*If you are experiencing symptoms and have severe hypertension, seek medical care*